

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-28. (canceled)

29. (original) A method of reducing the content of by-products in a production of biomass of lactic acid bacterial cells said method comprising of a step on increasing the yield of biomass by (I) providing in the cell conditions that results in a reduced glycolytic flux and (ii) providing conditions that enables the cell under aerobic conditions to have a respiratory metabolism.

30. (currently amended) A lactic acid bacterial cell obtainable by ~~the method according to claims 1 to 28~~ an increased yield of biomass of a lactic acid bacterial cell culture, the yield exceeding that which can be obtained at maximum from substrate level phosphorylation, the method of comprising the steps of

(i) providing in the cells of the culture conditions that result in a reduced glycolytic flux, and

(ii) providing conditions that enable the cells under aerobic conditions to have a respiratory metabolism.

31. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell produced by culturing the cell under conditions that results in a reduced glycolytic flux, and under conditions that enable the cells to have, under aerobic conditions, a respiratory metabolism, said cell having, relative to a lactic acid bacterial cell produced in the presence of a readily metabolised carbon source in excess, an increased activity of the enzymes involved in the uptake and/or degradation of a that carbon source in which the bacterial cell has been propagated, and containing a detectable amount of a porphyrin compound and/or a cytochrome.

32. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell according to claim 31 which constitutively expresses the *lac* operon and/or *gal* operon.

33. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell according to claim 32 wherein constitutive expression is provided by a mutation in the gene coding for the *lac* repressor and/or *lac* operon.

34. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell according to claim 31 that contains at least 0.1 ppm on a dry matter basis of a porphyrin compound.

35. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell according to claim 31 that contains at least 0.1 ppm on a dry matter basis of cytochrome.

36. (original) A lactic acid bacterial cell according to claim 31 which is a cell of a lactic acid bacterial species selected from the group consisting of a *Lactococcus* species, a *Streptococcus* species, a *Leuconostoc* species, a *Lactobacillus* species and an *Oenococcus* species.

37. (currently amended) A starter culture comprising the lactic acid bacterial culture according to ~~claim 1~~ or a lactic acid bacterial cell according to ~~claims claim~~ claim 30 to ~~31~~.

38. (original) A composition according to claim 37 where the composition is in the form of frozen, liquid or freeze-dried composition.

39. (currently amended) A composition according to ~~claims claim~~ claim 37 or 38 containing an

amount of viable culturally modified lactic acid bacterial cells which is in the range of 10^4 and 10^{12} CFU per g.

40. (currently amended) A composition according to ~~claims~~ claim 37 ~~to 39~~ that comprises cells of two or more different lactic acid bacterial strains.

41. (currently amended) A composition according to ~~claims~~ claim 37 ~~to 40~~ which further comprises at least one component enhancing the viability of the bacterial cell during storage, including a bacterial nutrient and/or a cryoprotectant.